A Reminisence of the Civil War

By C. J. H.

We young people should appreciate more keenly what a great privilege it is to converse with the veterans of the civil war. For it is now fifty years since the beginning of that great struggle; and the ranks of those who took part in it are thinning fast, in another decaded we shall lose almost entirely the opportunity of meeting with these "men of a former generation" and of hearing them relate the stories of the world-famous events in which they took part. When we show impatience at hearing the veterans' stories or make light of them, we give evidence of our being frivolous. For the civil war ranks among the very greatest contests that are recorded in history; and it is, indeed, a rare privilege to meet face to face with men who actually performed feats as wonderful as those that entrance us in the classic narratives of the past.

Of course, many of the veterans' stories have been recorded for the future; but more of them should be so preserved. The following is a veteran's account of his last battle. Although it is merely typical of the experiences of thousands of others, it is well worth recording; for we cannot record too many of these true life stories. And this one can be relitd upon as being literally true. For its author, Mr. Caleb Clay of Hickory, N. C., is a man of the strictest integrity and of sound intelligence. The literary quality of the narrative would be excellent. If I could reduce it verbatim as Mr. Clay related it to me, but it was not possible for would be excellent, if I could repro-

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"It was in the fall of 1863, and we were in the vicinity of Brandy Station, Va. We had not had muct to eat for several days. On Friday afternoon we got nothing but one biscuit and that was as hard as a soft brick. The next morning at Brandy Station we received an issue of rations for dinner, a little bacon and flour. It was about half past eleven when each man got his share, and we set to work to cook it. We had to use our lousy blankets for dough trays, and make the dough up with water and without salt, soda, or lard. As we were so hungry, it took but a few minutes for us to get the fires started and the meat and dough to baking.

"But before our rations got warm, the bugle sounded for us to fall in line. As we did not know a fight was on hand, many of us left our blankets and rations by the fires. Well they marched us out about two hundred yards then gave the command to double-quick; and we went double-quick from Brandy Station to Rappahannock Station, a distance of six miles. You would not believe that a man could keep up a trot for six miles, carrying sixty rounds of ammunition and a seventeen-pound rifle. But we certainly did it. I would look ten steps ahead of me and feel that I would surely drop dead before I could make that distance. And I was so tired that I did not care much if I did, but I held out somehow.

"Our stomachs being empty enabled us to hold out as well as we did. Then, of course, we had drilled so much that we were in training for such marching. Many of the men, however, did drop out.

"The wind was blowing hard that day from behind us. This wind so carried the sound of the firing from us that we did not know whether we were retreating or going into battle until we got within a few hundred yards of the cannon at Rappahannock Station. Here we found our guns stationed on the southern bank of the Rappahannock river and arrayed against the enemy who were north of the river.

"It was on the bank of this river that I saw General Lee and General Early for the last time. I remember distinctly of hearing Lee call to Early in a clear, keen tone. "General Early, you had better keep your men on this side of the river." Every answered with a d— that he would send the Yankees to the hot place.

"Accordingly we were rushed across the river on a pontoon bridge at double-quick time. The bridge swerved fearfully, and I thought I would be thrown into the river any moment but I was so dead tired that I did not care much. When we got across the bridge we were face to face with a large force of Yankees. There was a little trench along the northern bank of the river for us to take position in. Our fort was behind us on the southern bank of the river. I belonged to General Hoke's brigade, but Colonel Godwin was in command on this occasion, General Hoke being absent on account of wounds.

"The Yankees soon dismounted our battery that was protecting us. Then their infantry advanced upon us. They made charges. Each time we let them come with in a few yards of us, then taking careful aim, we would fire a volley into their ranks.. And there was only a man here and there left along the Yankee line to turn and run back. But on the seventh charge they crossed our line. I could hear the bayonest pierce the bodies of men all about me.

"In our last efforts Colonel Godwin ordered me and ten or twelve others to try to recapture several guns from the Yankees. We rushed up within fifty yards of the gun while they were firing. I was actually burned by the blaze from them. I thought how foolish it was for me to expose myself so, and dropped as flat as I cuid into a little depression in the ground. Just then I found a bayonet against my breast and heard a Yankee say:

"'Give up, Johnny.

"I threw up my hands.

"He said, 'Get up from there quick.

"I said, 'Wait till I cut off my cartridge-box.'

"Oh, he said, 'They will take that off for you.'

"But I cut it off because I did not want to hear them taunting me about giving up my arms.

"The Yankee who captured me was very kind. He said, 'Here, Johnny, won't you have a drink of whiskey?' I declined it; but you may be sure I would have accepted if he had said bread.

"We were outnumbered, all had to surrender, about 1,800 of us. Only one of our men escaped. That was General Hays. He got on the bridge just before the ropes were cut; and he ran across while the bridge was going down and while the Yankees were shooting at him. I tell you he made a quick passage of the river.

"Colonel Ham Jones made a desperate effort to escape. He pulled off his uniform and jumped into the river to swim across; but the water was too cold and the river too wide for him to make the passage, and he had to come back. While he was in the river some one got his uniform and Colonel Jones told me a short time before he died that he never did get that uniform back.

"A soldier is often much amused even in the thickest of a battle. I remember I laughed and laughed during this battle over a little incident. One man in our line close to me had an enormous nose. It was the largest nose I ever saw on any man's face. We were all dolging shells. Presently a piece of a shell glanced and struck this man on his nose. He clasped his hand to his face and shouted over and over, 'Oh, I'm killed; I'm killed.' It amused me exceedingly to think a dead man could hollo so loud and so long. His nose swelled at once, and was the most hideous nose imaginable. But I never saw the poor fellow afterwards. Perhaps, the wound did kill him.

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"That night the yankees put us captives into a little camp. The next morning we had to march ten miles to a railroad train, because several days before this we had torn up the track fifteen miles. When we reached the railroad, they put us into box-cars, and crowded as many as possible into each car. We had to stand like cattle, with hardly room to turn around. In this manner we were carried to Washington.

"We arrived there before day Monday morning. I remeber it was clear and frosty and the stars twinkled brightly. That day we were marched up street by the Capitol. And mind you, that we had not had a bite to eat since hard tack on the Friday before. During the day at Washington we received another hard tack and a dried herring. I had always regarded dried herrings as fit only for dogs to eat; but this herring was the best morsel I had ever rolled on my tongue.

"There was an immense crowd out that day to see the "Johnny rebs." They seemed to be expecting to see the whole Confederate army in captivity. I remember that just as we were passing the capitol, an old woman got to the edge of the crowd just as I got within hearing. And I heard her exclaim, 'Why, law; They are just like our folks. I thought they were all horny.'

"In a few days we were transported to Point Lookout for imprisonment. Point Lookout is a narrw strip of land between the Chespeake bay and the Potomac river. There I lived for seventeen months. And a most miserable life it was. We lived in tents about sixteen men to the tent. We had to sleep on the bare ground, and were not furnished with blankets. I left my blanket way down in Virginia where I had started to eat dinner. I was taken to prison early in November, and had to do without a blanket until the middle of January. At that time one of the men in our tent took the oath of allegiance and was set free. He left me his piece of a lousy blanket. Before I got that piece of a blanket. I thought I would freeze in spite of all I could do. At night I would wake, get up, and jump up and down as fast as I could to warm myself, then lay down to take another nap.

"The lice in camp drove us almost crazy. I have seen two thousand men sitting out in the sunshine with their shirts off, cracking lice. We could see the lice crawling on the tent floors like ants where they could be counted by the dozen.

"The whole camp was swept clean, though, every morning, and the refuse dumped into the bay. The ground was kept so clean that we could not get a chip, a stone, or a piece of paper for any purpose. I once gave a man five cents for a cob that I could use to scratch my back with every night, in my fight against the lice.

"The rations at first were good. But the Yankees complained so about how the yankee prisoners were suffering in the prisons in the South that they began to take their revenge on us. Then the rations became wretched. Often our portion was only four worm-eaten crackers per day. Sometimes we had beans, and the soup was literally peppered with little black bugs. We could get plenty of fish out of the bay, but we could rarely eat them, for they lived on the sewage from the camp.

"There was a young man in prison from South Carolina by the name of Morgan. He had friends in Baltimore who sent him a lot of text-book and he opened school in the prison. He was an excellent scholar, and it cost nothing to take his instruction; but I was so hungry that I could not study. I spent nearly all my time in making trinkets out of bone to sell for food. Oh, it was a hungry crowd we were all hungry all the time. Something to eat was the constant subject for the most of our conversations and thought. There was preaching as well as school every day. I always attended the preaching.

"The memory of all these things is more vivied in my mind now than it was five years after these events took place. My mind often reverts to them. And they pass and repass through my brain vividly, as if I were going back in my life to those hard and stirring times. Yes, indeed, I was glad to hear of Lee's surrender."—Charlotte Observer|

HOTEL GATES.

THE veranda of the Hotel Gates is crowded with guests listening appreciatively to some dreamy waltz played effectively by the orchestra. You enter the cool, spacious, well furnished lobby, catching a glimpse, perhaps, of many pretty girls and well groomed men on the smooth floor of the ball room, or of the immense dining room with its long vista of snowy-clad and flower decked tables—and your first impression of the Hotel Gates is not only a pleasant but a lasting one. You breathe an atmosphere of "know how" to care for the tourist, and it is as welcome as an oasis in some parched desert is to the tired traveler.

A longer acquaintance with the Hotel Gates but strengthens your impression. No detail which may contribute in any degree to the guest's comfort or pleasure is lacking, and this, possibly, is the keynote to the hotel's unqualified success as the summer hotel of Western North Carolina.

But you have registered, and not inclined to try the broad, easy stairs reaching the floors above, you step into a modern electric passenger elevator and whiz! you are out again on the second or third floor, into a pleasant lobby and following the neatly uniformed attendant along wide, thick carpeted halls to your room.

Here you find a big, generous brass bed that simply spells sweet slumber all over it. The windows are large and invite a view of the surrounding mountains, the electric bulbs are properly placed, the chairs comfortable. In short, the bed room is properly furnished and if you wish you may have such a one with a bath adjoining.

But now the inner man demands attention, and soon in the white dining room you are being served skilfully by swift-footed waiters. You find the surroundings of white clad tables, glistening furnishings and the faint odor of many flowers in no wise lessens your appetite. And you will find an abundance of everything with which to satisfy that appetite.

Opening from the lobby with its great mission chairs, you see the ladies' waiting room and the ladies' parlor—cool and pleasant both, where the writing of that promised letter home is no duty but becomes rather a delight and a pleasure. Outside is the veranda, suggesting the thought that a book or a magazine might there be more enjoyable, but you feel so thoroughly at ease where you are that you decide not to try it—now.

And that's just about the feeling you have anywhere in the hotel. No detail is lacking which may contribute to your pleasure while a guest. Mr. A. A. Gates, the owner and manager, has had over twenty years' experience with the traveling public. He knows what they want and he knows how to best supply that want. The enormous success and popularity of the Hotel Gates, now open for its fifth season, shows that he has succeeded here as for many years previous with the celebrated Mansion House in Greenville, S. C.

There are 138 sleeping rooms in the hotel, with and without private baths. There are, of course, electric lights, elevators and every other convenience. The service and cuisine are unexcelled and the charges are moderate.

For further information desired, address A. A. Gates, the Hotel Gates, Hendersonville, N. C.

FARMING DANGEROUS.

According to statistics compiled by the National Association of Manufacturers, farming is a much more dangerous occupation than iron or steel making, building construction or mining.

Of the total number of accidents that result in temporary disability 45 per cent occur, it is shown, in farming operations, 9 per cent in the iron and steel trades, 9 per cent in building work, and 8.5 per cent in mining.

The reason for the high percentage of accidents in farming is that the farm workers "has to handle teams machinery and explosives, and is too much of a jack of all trades to be skilled in any one.

That farming is an extra-hazardous occupation is a conclusion that will find difficulty in being popularly accepted, but if the figures quoted above are correct, it is one that is inevitable.

According to the census of 1910 of all persons engaged in the principal occupations, workers in agriculture pursuits constituted one-third. Forty five per cent of accidents falling in this class is , of course, a higher percentage than the number of persons in it would permit, were all occupations considered equally hazardous.

The large number of accidents happening to the workers in all the occupations is a disgrace to our civilization. In the past too much emphasis has been laid on having the workers produce the greatest results in dollars and cents and too little on seeing that the workers are supplied with sanitary and safe surroundings in which to work, and likewise with safe tools and equipment.

If the purposoe of the manufacturers' association in compiling and displaying the accident statictics with reference to farming was to excuse the high percentage of accidnts in their own business, its action is a mistake.

If farming is espically dangerous, then enlightened intelligence and consciousness must work to lessen its peril. This intelligence and consciousness is already at work with respect to the great industrial enterprises where even if the injuries are not so large in the aggregate they are, because of totally different conditions and surroundings, more serious in effect, producing greater suffering and want.

The necessity of lowering the high percentaage of accidents in these enterprises is urgent. The workmen's compensation laws that are being enacted in a number of States are conductive to this end, as is also the fact that employers are realizing more and more that the elimination of accidents to their employes means success and prosperity for their business.

It gives us a jolt to find that the leading citizen is hungry three times a day and that he snores in his sleep.